WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1.   An electronic commerce system providing market feedback to sellers, the system comprising a server operating on one or more computers and operable to:

record query information associated with a search query for a buyer of one or more databases containing product data;

record presentation information associated with presentation of a plurality of search results to the buyer, each search result comprising data for a product matching one or more search criteria specified in the search query, the search results comprising one or more search results reflecting product data for a particular seller;

record selection information associated with selection by the buyer of a particular search result from among the plurality of search results; and

provide at least some of the recorded query information, presentation information, or selection information to the particular seller to allow the particular seller to assess one or more aspects of its product data relative to product data of other sellers.

2.   The system of Claim 1, wherein the one or more databases comprise a shared product data repository containing product data for a plurality of products available from a plurality of sellers.

3.   The system of Claim 1, wherein the server is operable to provide information to the particular seller by communicating the information to the particular seller substantially immediately following the selection of the particular search result by the buyer.

4.   The system of Claim 1, wherein the server is further operable to record contract information reflecting one or more terms of a contract between the buyer and a second seller following the selection of the particular search result by the buyer, the particular search result reflecting product data of the second seller.

5. The system of Claim 1, wherein the query information reflects one or more product attribute values and one or more seller attribute values specified in the search query.

6. The system of Claim 1, wherein:

the presentation information reflects a position of a search result for the particular seller within an ordered display of the search results; and

the selection information reflects a position of the selected search result within the ordered display of the search results.

7. The system of Claim 1, wherein the presentation information reflects one or more buyer-specified sort criteria used to sort the search results, each sort criterion selected from the group consisting of a product attribute, a product attribute value, a seller attribute, and a seller attribute value.

8. The system of Claim 1, wherein the selection information reflects at least one of:

the number of search results considered by the buyer; and

whether the buyer considered one or more search results for the particular seller.

9. The system of Claim 8, wherein the selection information reflects at least one of:

one or more product attribute values or seller attribute values for one or more search results for the particular seller considered but not selected by the buyer; and

one or more product attribute values or seller attribute values for the search result selected by the buyer.

10. The system of Claim 9, wherein the selection information excludes product attribute values and seller attribute values for the search result selected by the buyer that are to be kept in confidence from sellers other than the seller associated with the selected search result.

11.   The system of Claim 1, wherein the selection information reflects at least one of:

a position of the selected search result within the plurality of search results presented to the buyer; and

one or more reasons for the position, relative to the search result selected by the buyer, of a search result for the particular seller.

12. Software providing market feedback to sellers, the software being embodied in a computer-readable medium and when executed operable to:
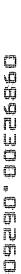
record query information associated with a search query for a buyer of one or more databases containing product data;

record presentation information associated with presentation of a plurality of search results to the buyer, each search result comprising data for a product matching one or more search criteria specified in the search query, the search results comprising one or more search results reflecting product data for a particular seller;

record selection information associated with selection by the buyer of a particular search result from among the plurality of search results; and

provide at least some of the recorded query information, presentation information, or selection information to the particular seller to allow the particular seller to assess one or more aspects of its product data relative to product data of other sellers.

13. The software of Claim 12, wherein the one or more databases comprise a shared product data repository containing product data for a plurality of products available from a plurality of sellers.

14. The software of Claim 12, operable to provide information to the particular seller by communicating the information to the particular seller substantially immediately following the selection of the particular search result by the buyer.

15. The software of Claim 12, further operable to record contract information reflecting one or more terms of a contract between the buyer and a second seller following the selection of the particular search result by the buyer, the particular search result reflecting product data of the second seller.

16. The software of Claim 12, wherein the query information reflects one or more product attribute values and one or more seller attribute values specified in the search query.

17.   The software of Claim 12, wherein:

the presentation information reflects a position of a search result for the particular seller within an ordered display of the search results; and

the selection information reflects a position of the selected search result within the ordered display of the search results.

18.   The software of Claim 12, wherein the presentation information reflects one or more buyer-specified sort criteria used to sort the search results, each sort criterion selected from the group consisting of a product attribute, a product attribute value, a seller attribute, and a seller attribute value.

19.   The software of Claim 12, wherein the selection information reflects at least one of:

the number of search results considered by the buyer; and

whether the buyer considered one or more search results for the particular seller.

20.   The software of Claim 19, wherein the selection information reflects at least one of:

one or more product attribute values or seller attribute values for one or more search results for the particular seller considered but not selected by the buyer; and

one or more product attribute values or seller attribute values for the search result selected by the buyer.

21.   The software of Claim 20, wherein the selection information excludes product attribute values and seller attribute values for the search result selected by the buyer that are to be kept in confidence from sellers other than the seller associated with the selected search result.

22.   The software of Claim 12, wherein the selection information reflects at least one of:

a position of the selected search result within the plurality of search results presented to the buyer; and

one or more reasons for the position, relative to the search result selected by the buyer, of a search result for the particular seller.

23.   A method for providing market feedback to sellers, comprising:

recording query information associated with a search query for a buyer of one or more databases containing product data;

recording presentation information associated with presentation of a plurality of search results to the buyer, each search result comprising data for a product matching one or more search criteria specified in the search query, the search results comprising one or more search results reflecting product data for a particular seller;

recording selection information associated with selection by the buyer of a particular search result from among the plurality of search results; and

providing at least some of the recorded query information, presentation information, or selection information to the particular seller to allow the particular seller to assess one or more aspects of its product data relative to product data of other sellers.

24.   The method of Claim 23, wherein the one or more databases comprise a shared product data repository containing product data for a plurality of products available from a plurality of sellers.

25.   The method of Claim 23, wherein providing information to the particular seller comprises communicating the information to the particular seller substantially immediately following the selection of the particular search result by the buyer.

26.   The method of Claim 23, further comprising recording contract information reflecting one or more terms of a contract between the buyer and a second seller following the selection of the particular search result by the buyer, the particular search result reflecting product data of the second seller.

27.   The method of Claim 23, wherein the query information reflects one or more product attribute values and one or more seller attribute values specified in the search query.

28.   The method of Claim 23, wherein:

the presentation information reflects a position of a search result for the particular seller within an ordered display of the search results; and

the selection information reflects a position of the selected search result within the ordered display of the search results.

29.   The method of Claim 23, wherein the presentation information reflects one or more buyer-specified sort criteria used to sort the search results, each sort criterion selected from the group consisting of a product attribute, a product attribute value, a seller attribute, and a seller attribute value.

30.   The method of Claim 23, wherein the selection information reflects at least one of:

the number of search results considered by the buyer; and

whether the buyer considered one or more search results for the particular seller.

31.   The method of Claim 30, wherein the selection information reflects at least one of:

one or more product attribute values or seller attribute values for one or more search results for the particular seller considered but not selected by the buyer; and

one or more product attribute values or seller attribute values for the search result selected by the buyer.
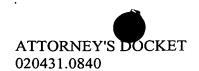
32.   The method of Claim 31, wherein the selection information excludes product attribute values and seller attribute values for the search result selected by the buyer that are to be kept in confidence from sellers other than the seller associated with the selected search result.

33.   The method of Claim 23, wherein the selection information reflects at least one of:

a position of the selected search result within the plurality of search results presented to the buyer; and

5   one or more reasons for the position, relative to the search result selected by the buyer, of a search result for the particular seller.

34.   A system for providing market feedback to sellers, comprising:

means for recording query information associated with a search query for a buyer of one or more databases containing product data;

means for recording presentation information associated with presentation of a plurality of search results to the buyer, each search result comprising data for a product matching one or more search criteria specified in the search query, the search results comprising one or more search results reflecting product data for a particular seller;

means for recording selection information associated with selection by the buyer of a particular search result from among the plurality of search results; and

means for providing at least some of the recorded query information, presentation information, or selection information to the particular seller to allow the particular seller to assess one or more aspects of its product data relative to product data of other sellers.

35.   An electronic commerce system for providing market feedback to sellers, the system comprising a server operating on one or more computers and operable to:

record query information associated with a search query for a buyer of one or more databases containing product data, the query information reflecting one or more product attribute values and one or more seller attribute values specified in the search query;

record presentation information associated with presentation of a plurality of search results to the buyer, each search result comprising data for a product matching one or more search criteria specified in the search query, the search results comprising one or more search results reflecting product data for a particular seller, the presentation information reflecting a position of a search result for the particular seller within an ordered display of the search results;

record selection information associated with selection by the buyer of a particular search result from among the plurality of search results, the selection information reflecting:

whether the buyer considered one or more search results for the particular seller;

one or more product attribute values or seller attribute values for one or more search results for the particular seller considered but not selected by the buyer;

a position of a search result for the particular seller within an ordered display of the search results; and

one or more product attribute values or seller attribute values for the search result selected by the buyer; and

a position of the selected search result within the plurality of search results presented to the buyer; and

provide at least some of the recorded query information, presentation information, or selection information to the particular seller to allow the particular seller to assess one or more aspects of its product data relative to product data of other sellers.